



**AACTE-CT Statement to the State Board of Education Meeting  
on 5-5-21**

Good morning everyone and thank you for the opportunity to provide comments to the State Board of Education at your May 5<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

My name is Isaac Gottesman, and I am the current Vice President of the Connecticut Chapter of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE-CT). I am also the Chair of the Department of Education at the University of Saint Joseph in West Hartford. AACTE-CT is an association of fourteen public and private colleges and universities that provide Educator Preparation Programs to students interested in the education profession. We promote and strongly support high quality teaching and education in the state's schools and are advocates for robust educational leadership.

On behalf of the AACTE-CT, thank you to the Board of Education, Acting Commissioner Russell-Tucker, the Department of Education, and especially to those individuals who many of us from AACTE-CT work with on a regular basis.

In my comments today, I want to publicly thank, on behalf of all of us working in educator preparation in the State of Connecticut, the teachers, administrators, and staff who have kept school going during this pandemic, whether virtually online or in COVID safe conditions in-person. As the Board knows, schools are challenging, complex systems in the best of times. In COVID times, the efforts to provide educational opportunities for all children have been heroic, from the work of custodial staff and administrative assistants to paraprofessionals and classroom teachers to building and district leaders, the work has been truly extraordinary. All have given more, emotionally and intellectually, than anyone could ever ask. For those of us in educator preparation, the work of everyone in schools has been inspiring and humbling. Thank you.

As we plan for the 2021-2022 school year and a post-pandemic future, I think we are all thinking about how COVID will change the life of schools. As a historian of education, I know that schooling has never been static. There has always been change. The questions before us are thus about the types of change and if those changes will continue to be driven by a common school ideal, one that seeks to make public education rich and rigorous, caring and relevant for all students, including, if not especially, for those who have historically been the most marginalized. As teacher educators, we, the members of AACTE-CT, are asking ourselves about the challenges of this historical moment for our own work. As we move forward, we know that our continued partnership with the Board, the Department of Education, and a range of other educational stakeholders, from professional associations to community organizations, remains central to engaging this work in a manner that truly responds to the challenges of our time. We look forward to continued conversations as we work together to serve the students, families, and communities of the State of Connecticut.

Please continue to feel free to reach out to our association on issues of mutual interest. Thank you again for the opportunity to address the Board.

Isaac Gottesman  
Vice President, AACTE-CT  
Chair and Associate Professor  
Department of Education  
University of Saint Joseph  
323 Mercy Hall  
1678 Asylum Ave  
West Hartford, CT 06117  
phone: 860.231.5261  
email: [igottesman@usj.edu](mailto:igottesman@usj.edu)  
pronouns: he/him/his